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ABSTRACT

This report presents data from a 1999 survey of sixth graders in the District of Columbia. The survey asked students: (1) where they were; (2) what they were doing; and (3) who they were with the day before, on the hour and on the half hour, between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m. The surveys were administered on Wednesday, November 10, because the previous day was a typical school day. Out of about 160 schools, over 60 percent returned surveys. Data on over 3,400 sixth graders were collected, representing a cross-section of the city by poverty, ward, and school type. Overall, students spent most of their time at school until 4:00, then they spent a little over half of their time at home until 6:00. During those times, they spent significant amounts of time on homework. From 4:00-6:00, they also spent significant time watching television or playing computer games. Most students were with adults from 3:00-6:00, though significant numbers were without adults during this time. Students' activities, time spent with adults, and location after school varied by the type of school they attended (private, public religious, or charter). (SM)

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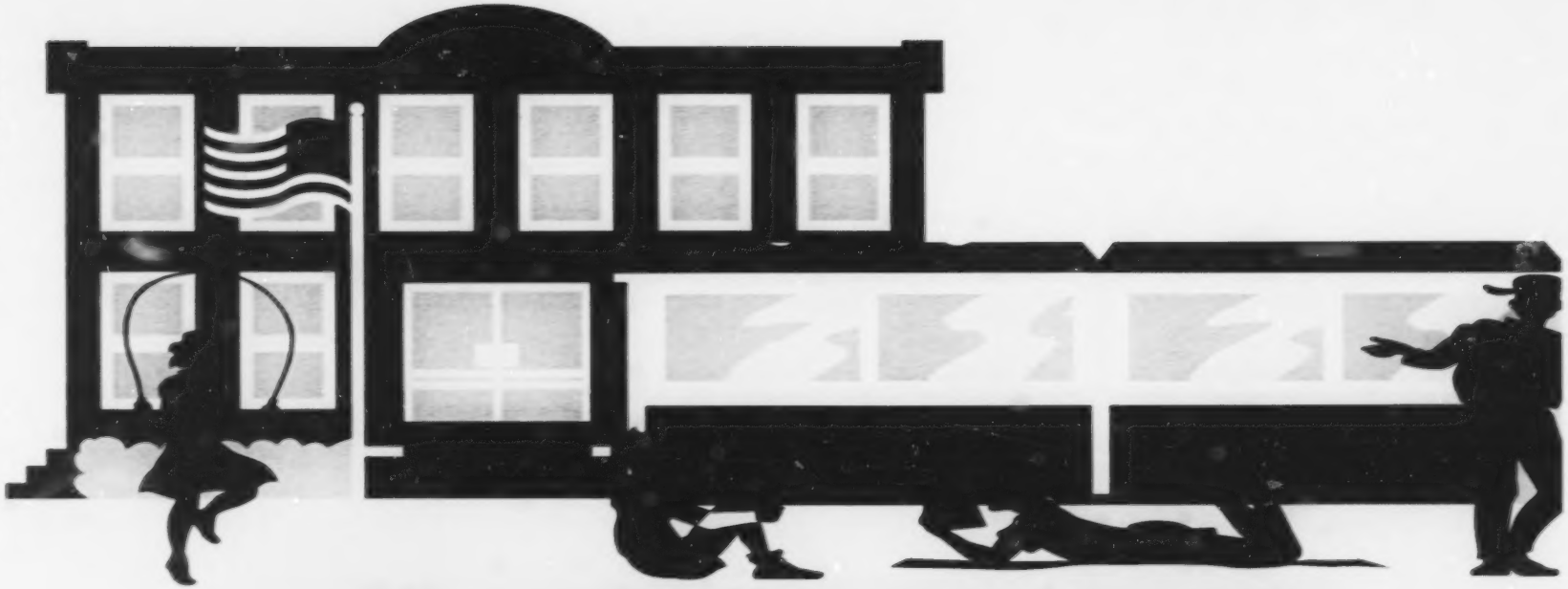

A Day in the Life of DC Kids

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Prepared by Jane Hannaway and Duncan Chaplin

S. Brown

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A Day in the Life of DC Kids

After school activities have been under the spotlight recently amid growing concern that what happens to children outside of school matters a great deal for child development and child safety.

Children are at highest risk of being victimized by crime between the hours of 3 and 6 p.m. This nationally recognized pattern has also been observed in Washington, D.C. And nationally, a large number of youth could be at risk: roughly 4 million 6- to 12-year-olds with employed mothers are regularly in self-care when not at school, according to other Urban Institute research.

A major federal initiative, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, was designed to keep youth in constructive and supervised activities during these late-afternoon hours and was approved for over $800 million for fiscal year 2001.

But what do DC youth have to say about their after-school activities? They had a chance to share their experiences with researchers in a recent Urban Institute survey, "A Day in the Life of DC Kids." On Nov. 10, 1999, DC sixth-graders were asked three questions: (1) Where were you? (2) What were you doing? (3) Who were you with? Answers were given for time spent the previous day, on the hour and on the half hour, between 3 and 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, November 10 was chosen because the previous day, November 9, was typical in that there were no special exams or holidays. Teachers administered the surveys to the students at school. Out of about 160 schools, over 60% (over 100 schools) returned surveys. Data on over 3,400 sixth-graders were collected, representing a cross-section of the city by poverty, ward, and school type.

This study was produced by Jane Hannaway and Duncan Chaplin of the Urban Institute's Education Policy Center. The researchers wish to thank Kristen Olson, Zakia Redd, and Andreas Pape, also of the Urban Institute; and Joyce Jamison and other DC public school staff, for their invaluable assistance.

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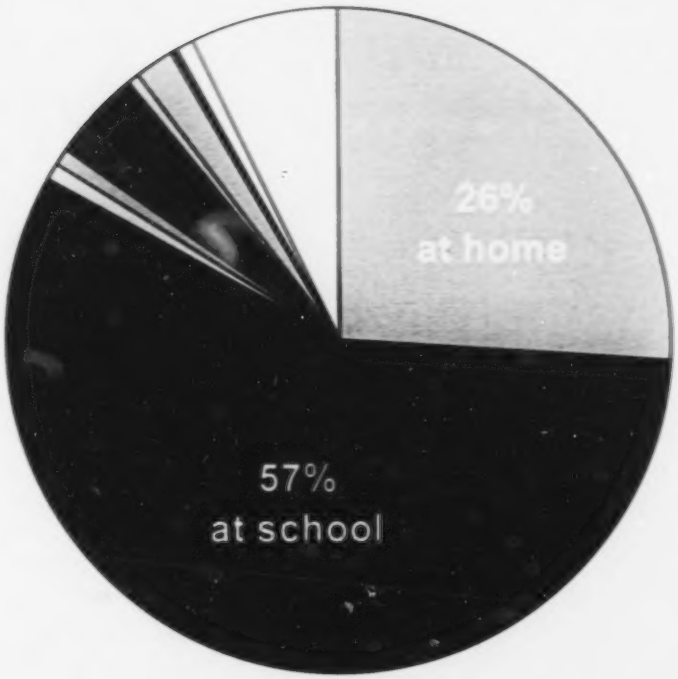
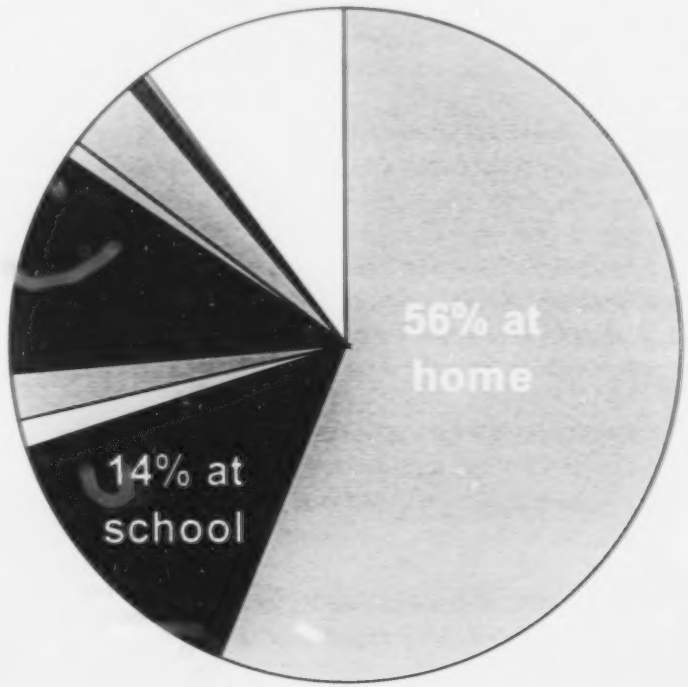
Q: Where were sixth-grade students?

A: From 3:00 to 4:00 p.m., they spent most of their time at school. From 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., they spent a little over half their time at home.

3:00-4:00 p.m.



4:00-6:00 p.m.



- ☐ **AT HOME**
- ☐ at my parent's job
- ■ store, restaurant, or mall
- ☐ church
- ■ library
- ☐ other

- ■ **AT SCHOOL**
- ☐ park
- ■ someone else's house
- ☐ Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, or Community Center
- ☐ at the Doctor or Dentist

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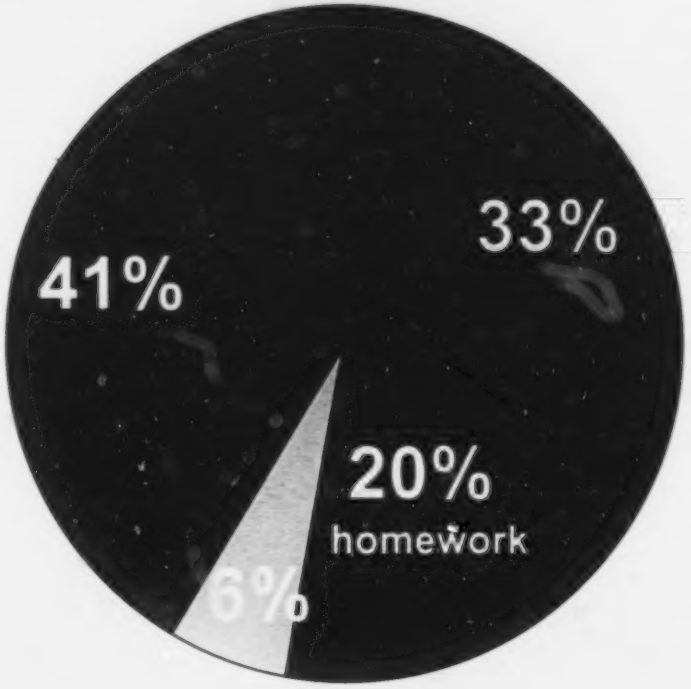
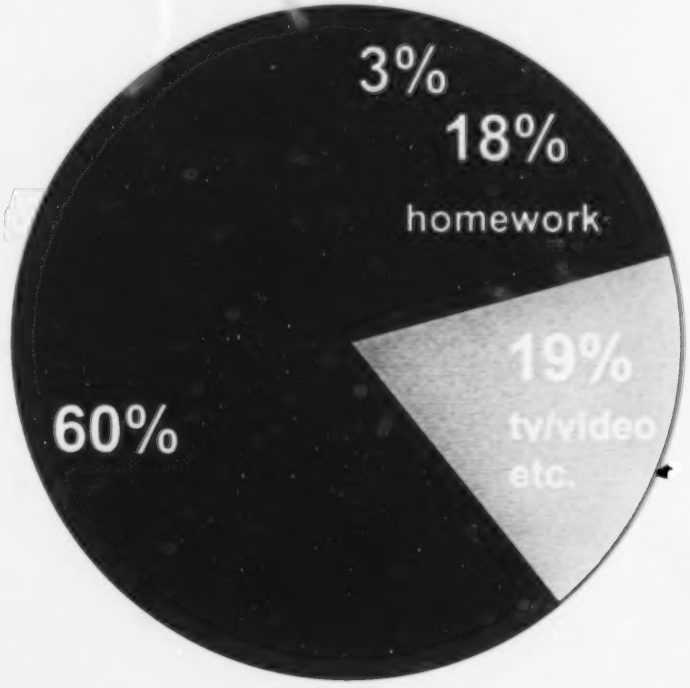
Q: What were sixth-grade students doing?

A: Between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. and between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., students spent a significant amount of time on homework. From 4:00 to 6:00, students also spent a significant amount of time watching TV or playing computer games.

3:00-4:00 p.m.



4:00-6:00 p.m.



■ STILL IN CLASS ■ HOMEWORK □ TV/MOVIES/VIDEO/COMPUTER GAMES ■ OTHER

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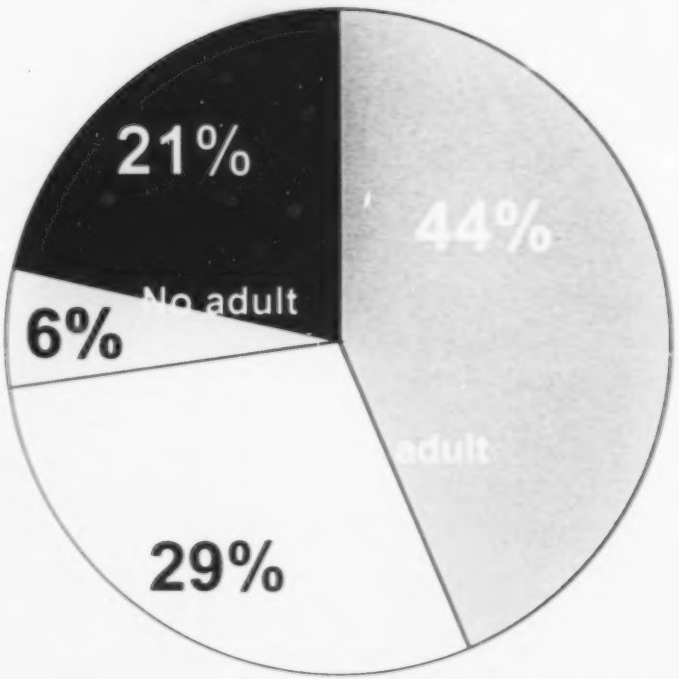
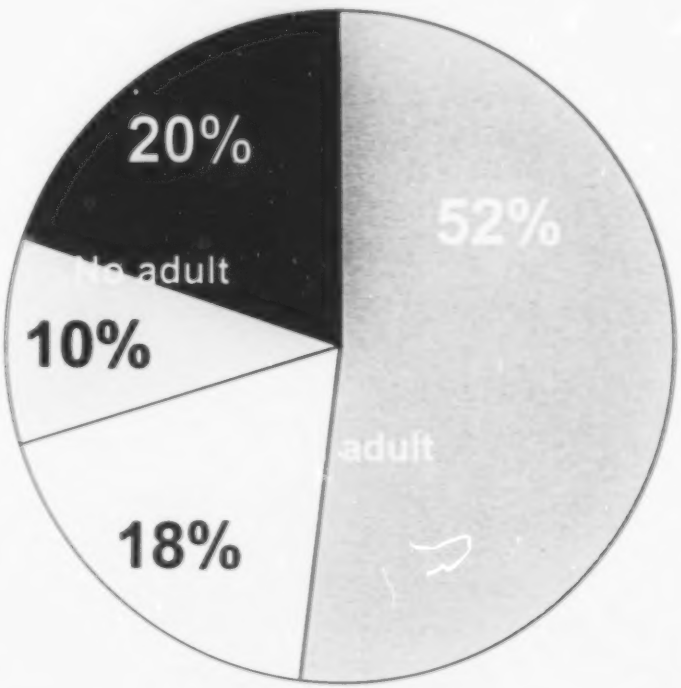
Q: Who were students with?

A: Most sixth-graders spent their time right after school with adults, but significant shares were without adults between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m.

3:00-4:00 p.m.



4:00-6:00 p.m.



☐ Adult ☐ Other kids and adult ☐ Alone ■ Other kids, no adult

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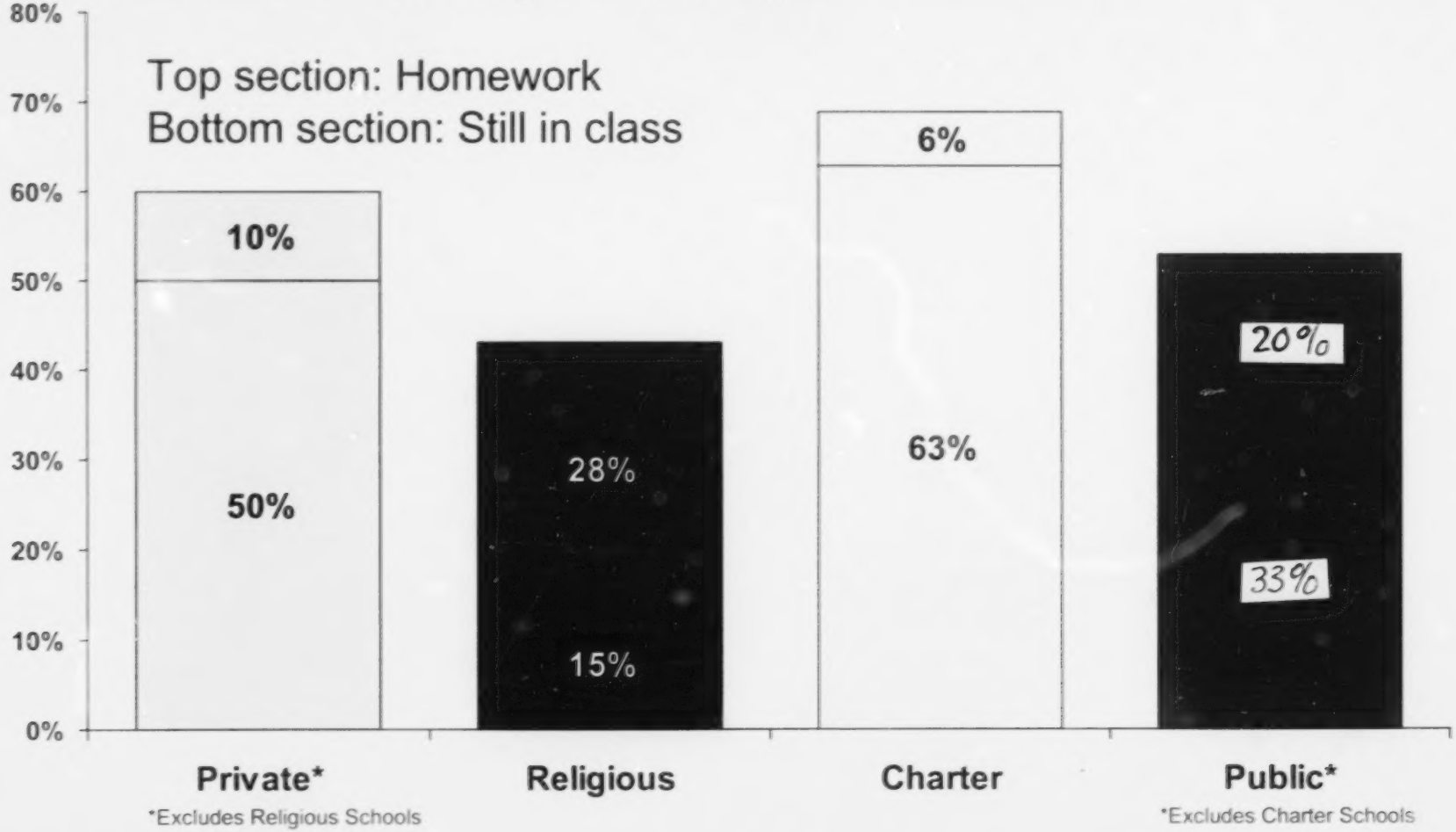
Q: Between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m., did time spent by sixth-grade students in class or on homework vary by school type?

A: Sixth-graders in private and charter schools spent more time in class than sixth-graders in other types of schools, but private and charter schools tend to have longer school days.



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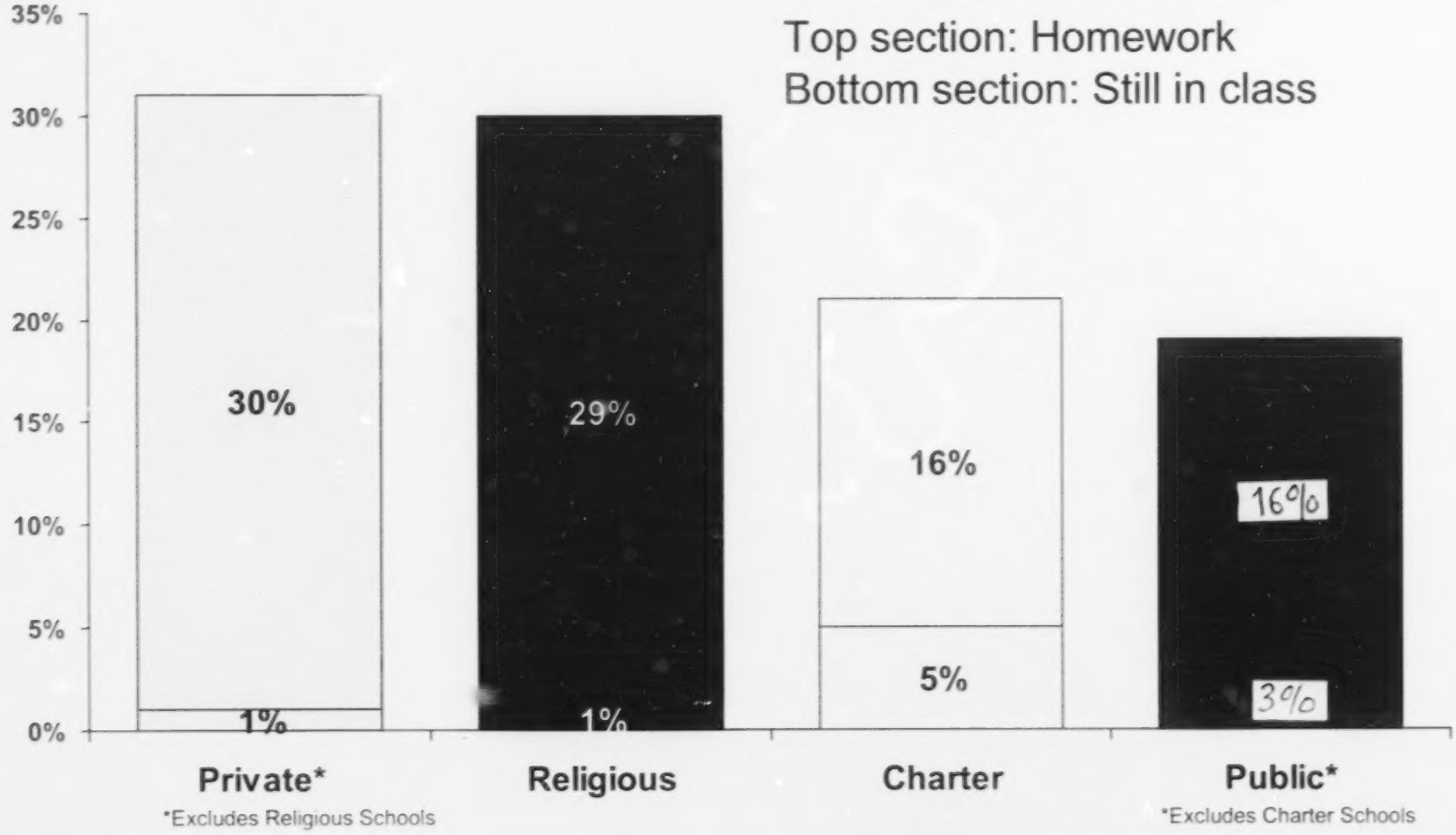
Q: Between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., did time spent by sixth-graders in class or on homework vary by school type?

A: Sixth-graders in private and private religious schools spent more time doing homework than sixth-graders in other types of schools..



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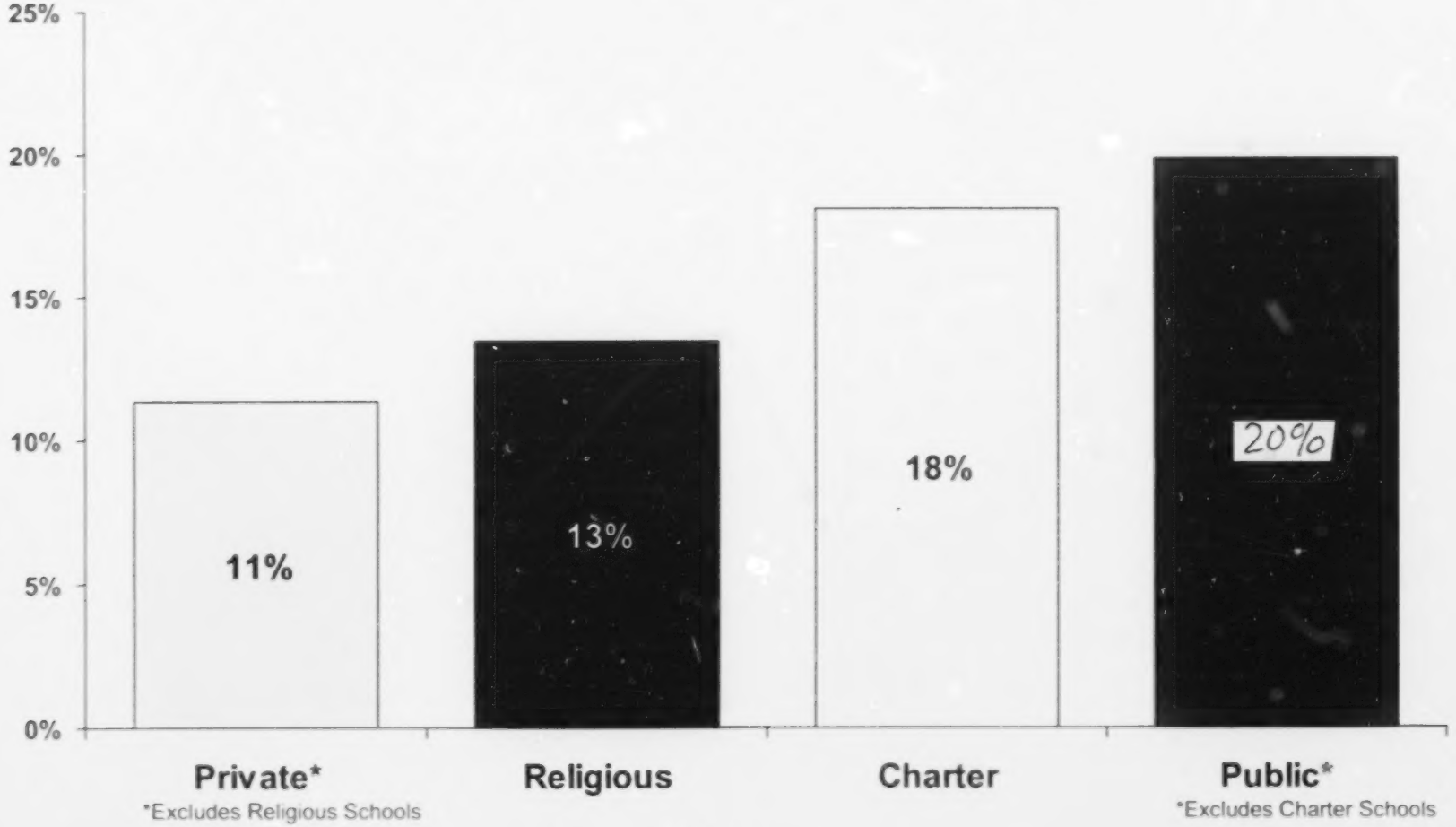
Q: Between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., did the share of time spent by sixth-grade students on TV/Movies/Video/Computer Games vary by school type?
A: Public school sixth-graders spent more time on this activity than sixth-graders in other types of schools.



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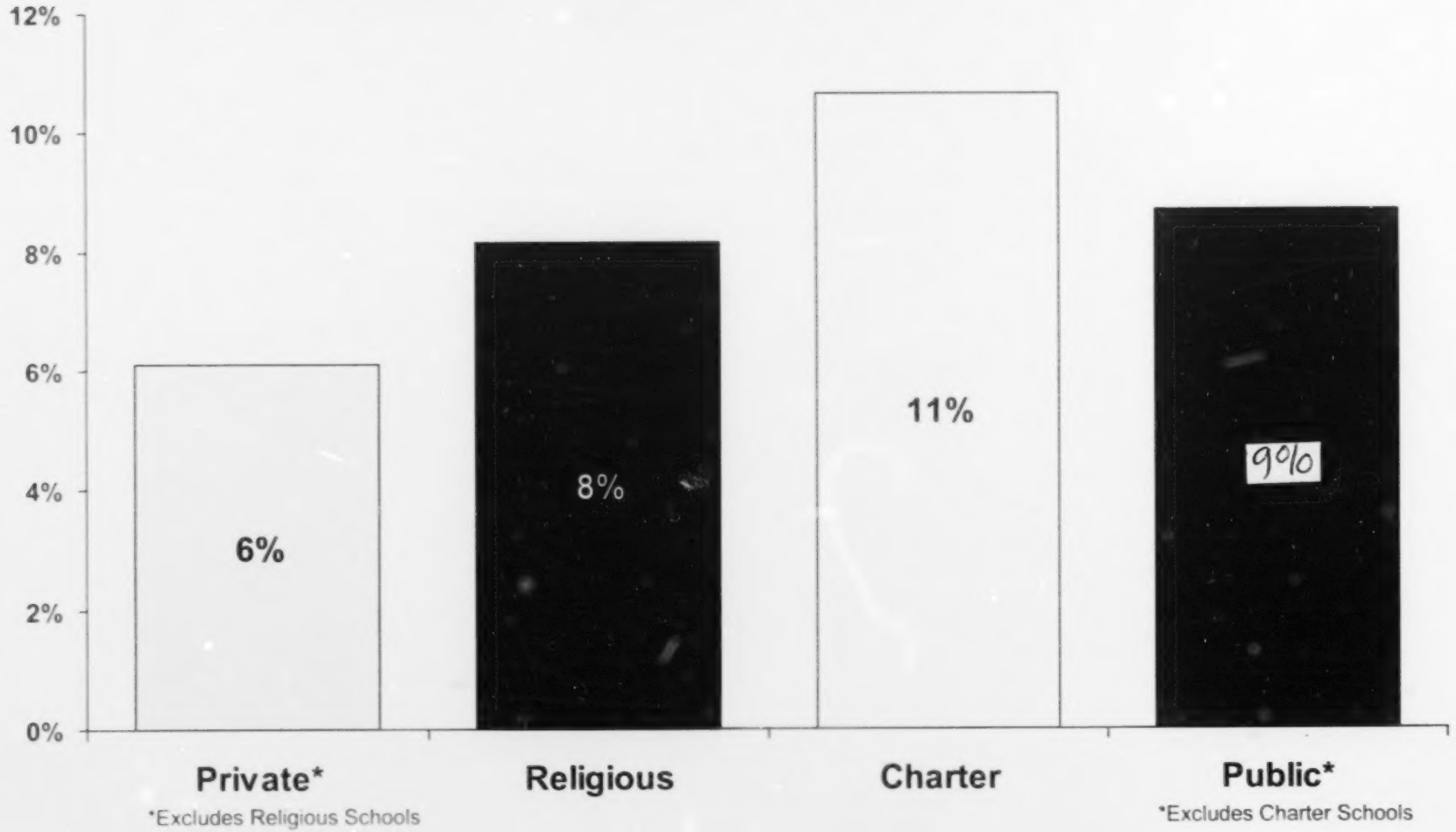
Q: Between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., did the share of time spent by sixth-grade students "hanging out" vary by school type?

A: Public school sixth-graders spent more time "hanging out" than those in private schools.



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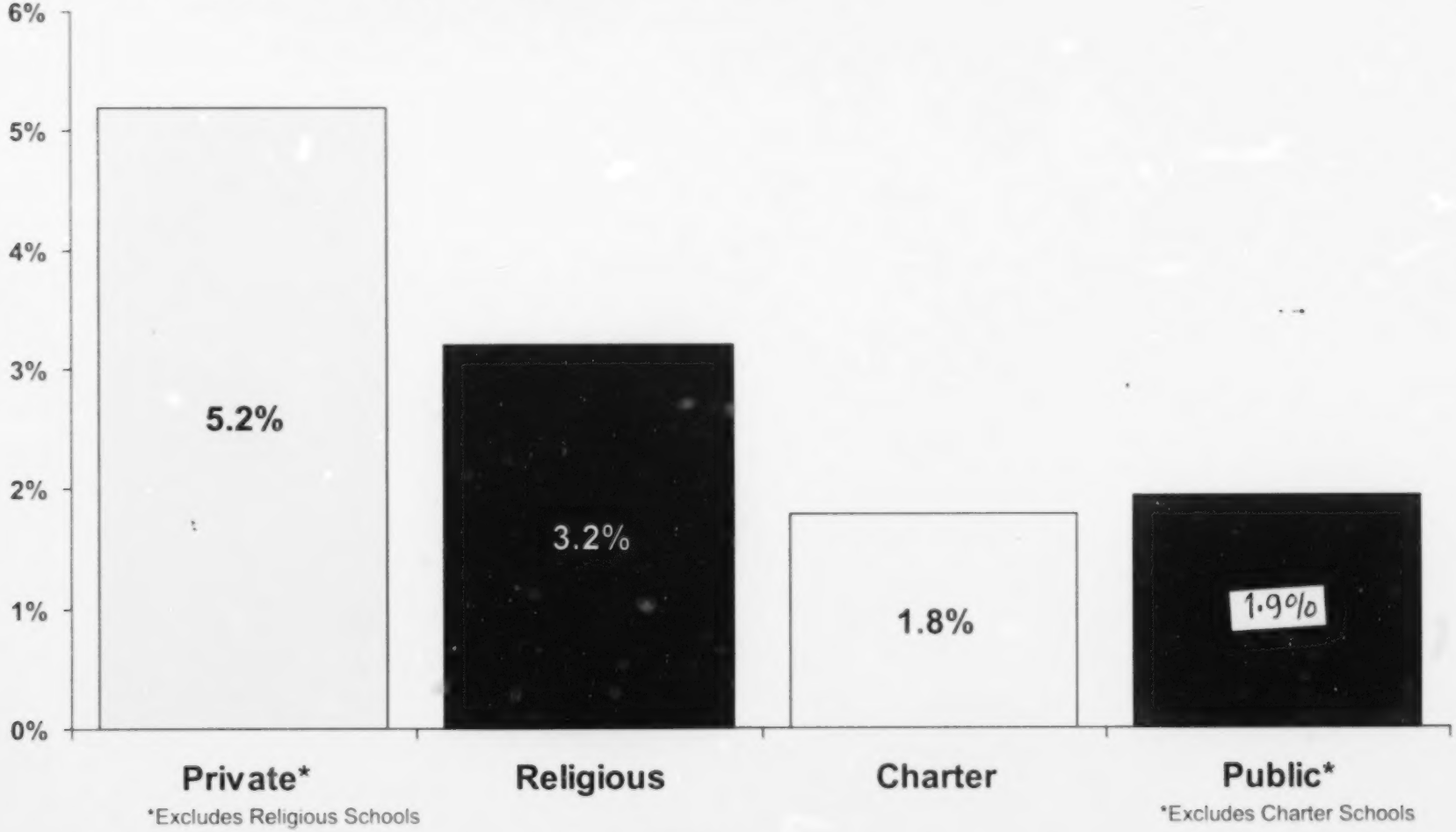
Q: Between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., did the share of time sixth-grade students spent using the Internet vary by school type?

A: Private school sixth-graders spent much more time on the internet than sixth-graders in other types of schools.



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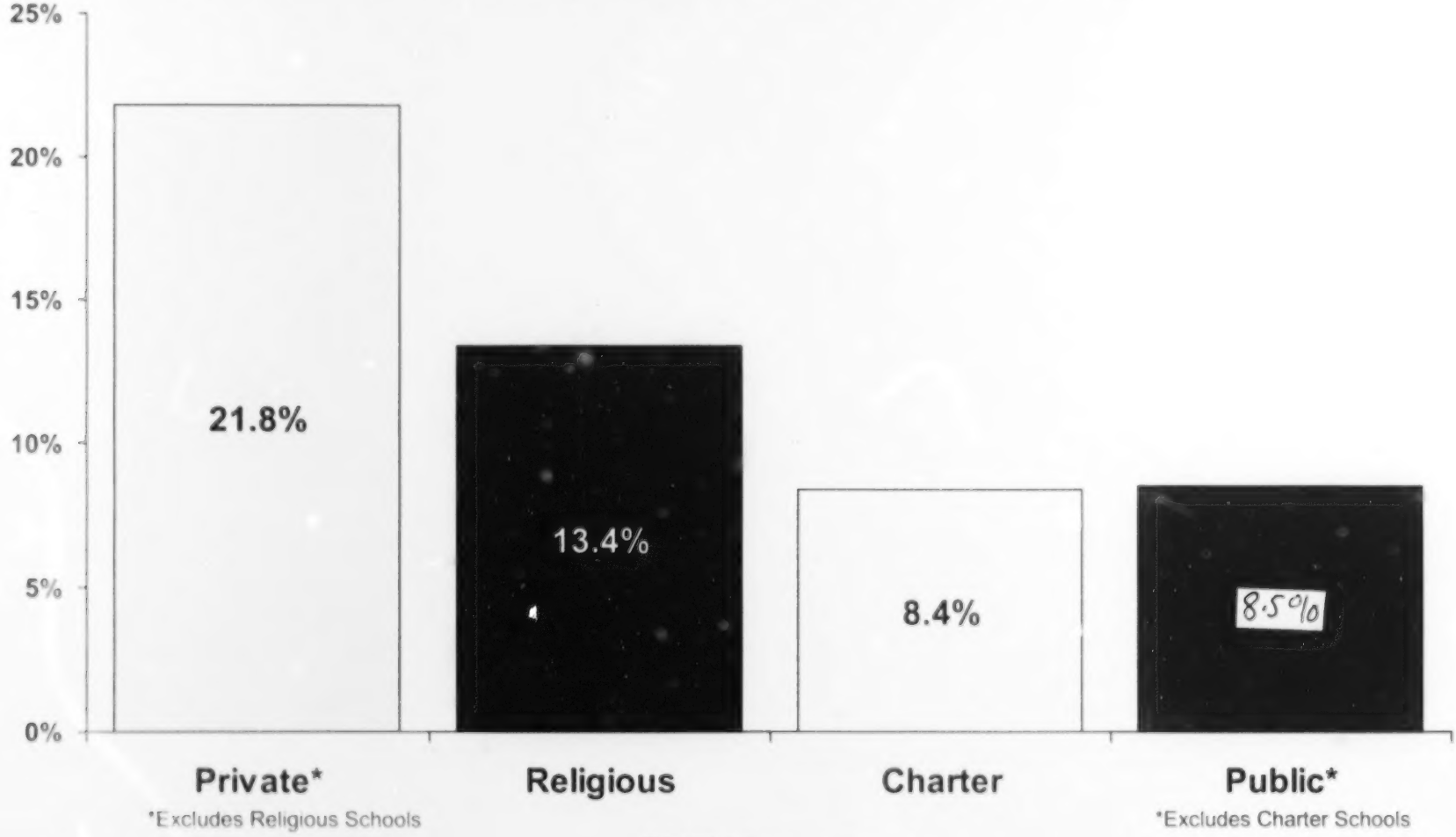
Q: Between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m., did the share of sixth-grade students who used the Internet vary by school type?

A: Private school sixth-graders were much more likely than sixth-graders in other types of schools to use the Internet in the hours right after school.



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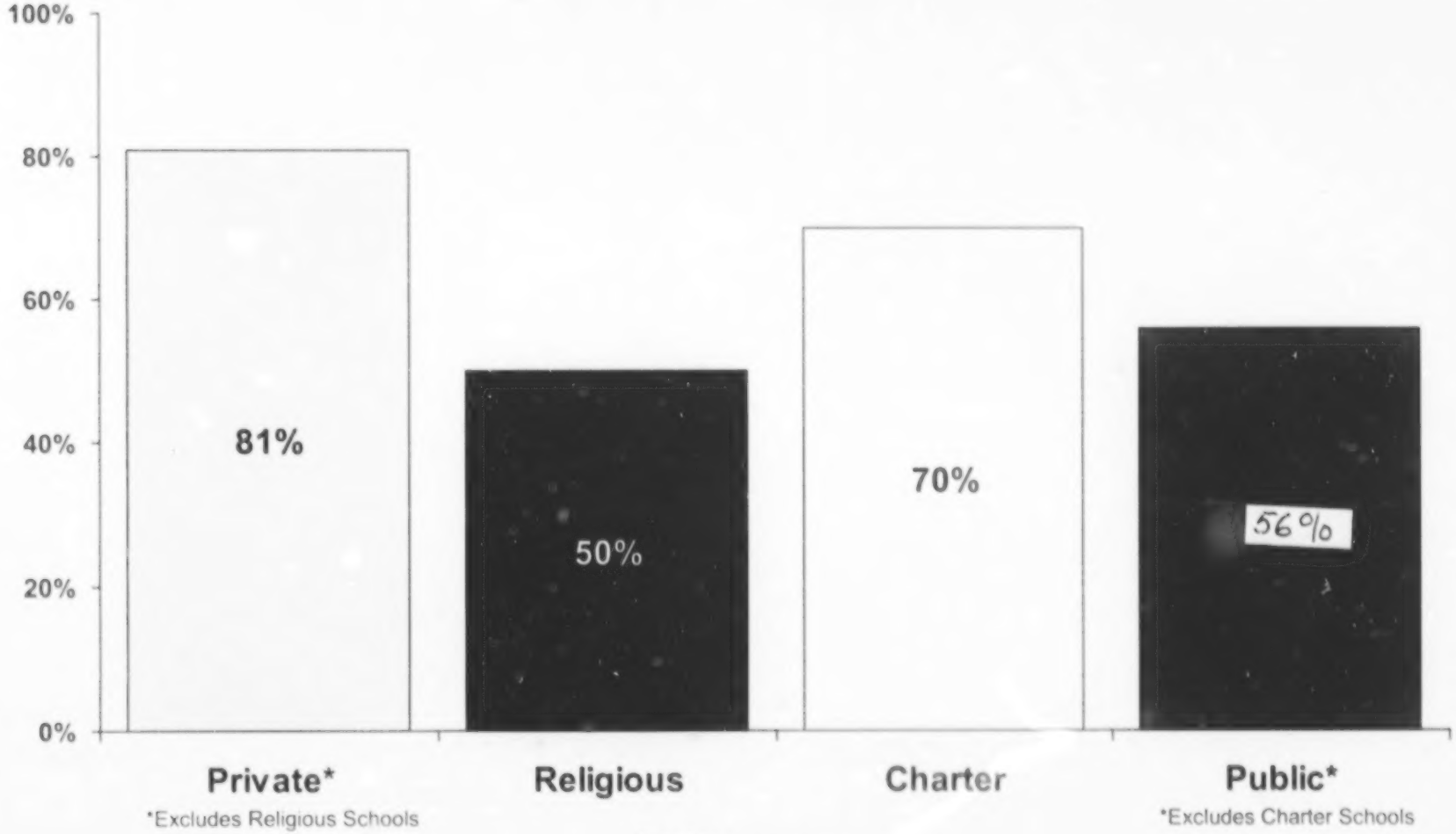
Q: Between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m., did the share of time sixth-grade students spent at school vary by school type?

A: Private school sixth-graders spent more time at school than other sixth-graders.



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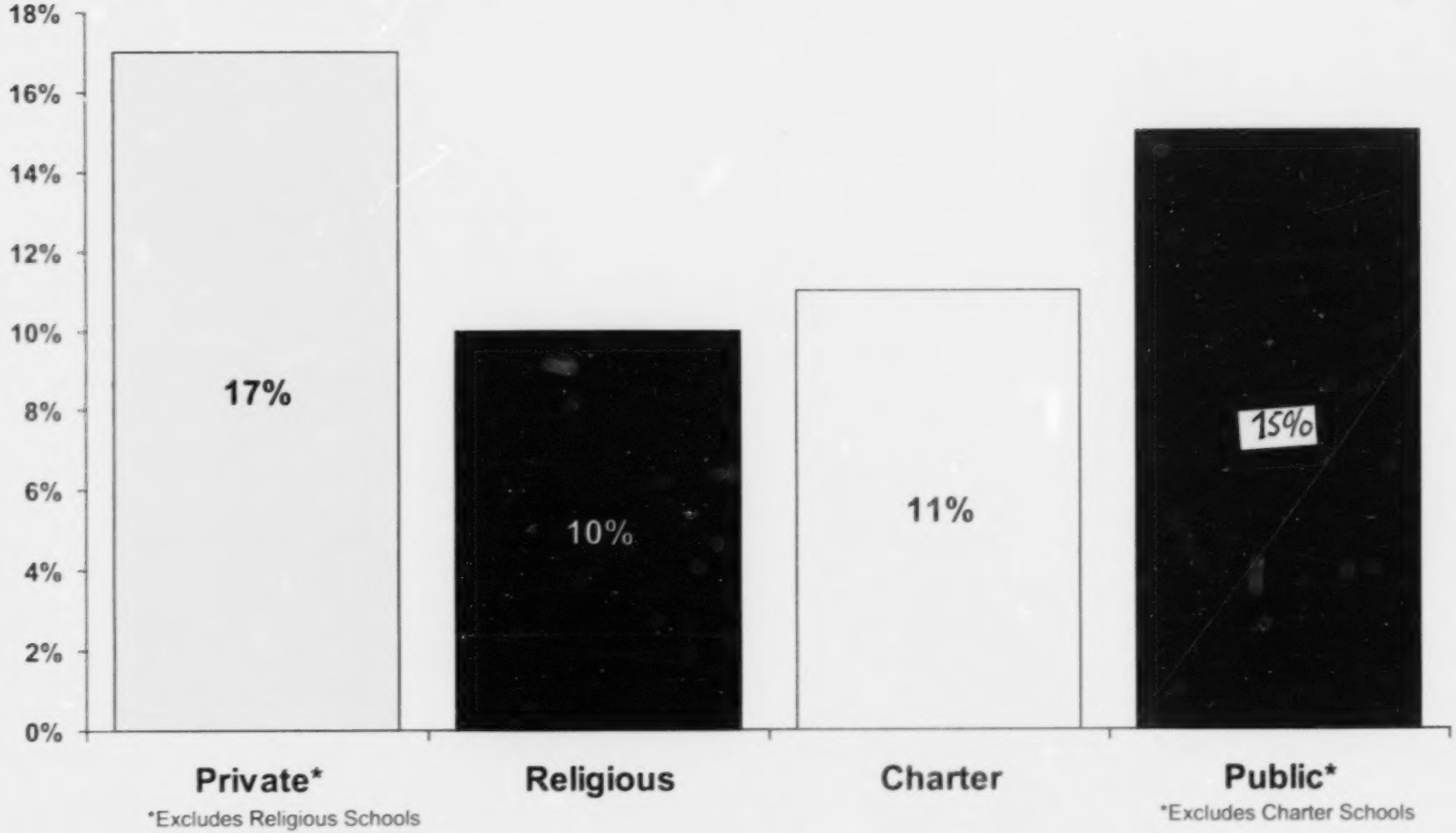
Q: Between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., did the share of time sixth-grade students spent at school vary by school type?

A: Private school sixth-graders spent a little more of their time at school than public school sixth-graders.



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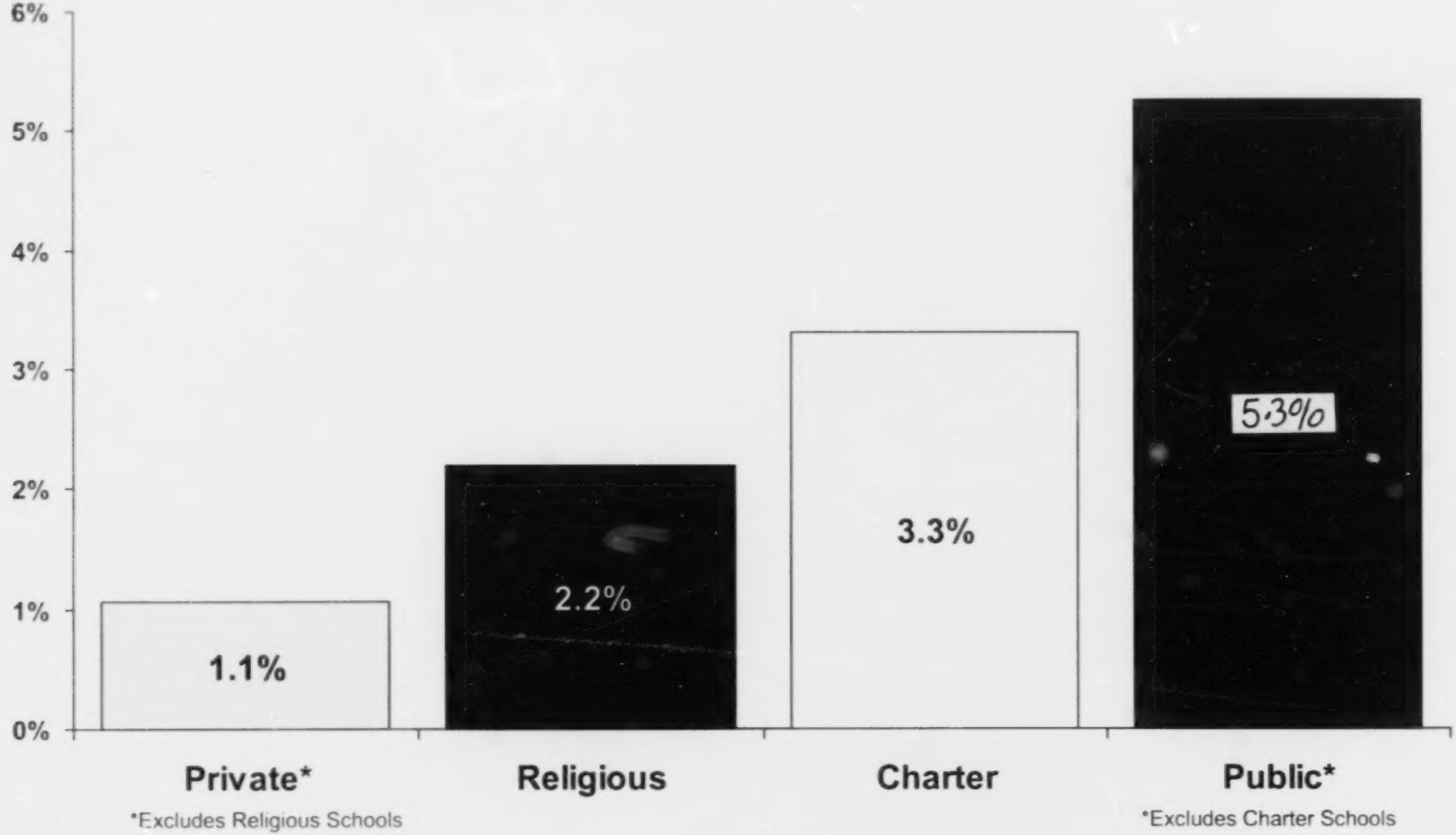
Q: Between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., did the share of time students spent at a community organization or church vary by school type?

A: Public school sixth-graders spent more time than sixth-graders in other types of schools at a community organization or a church.



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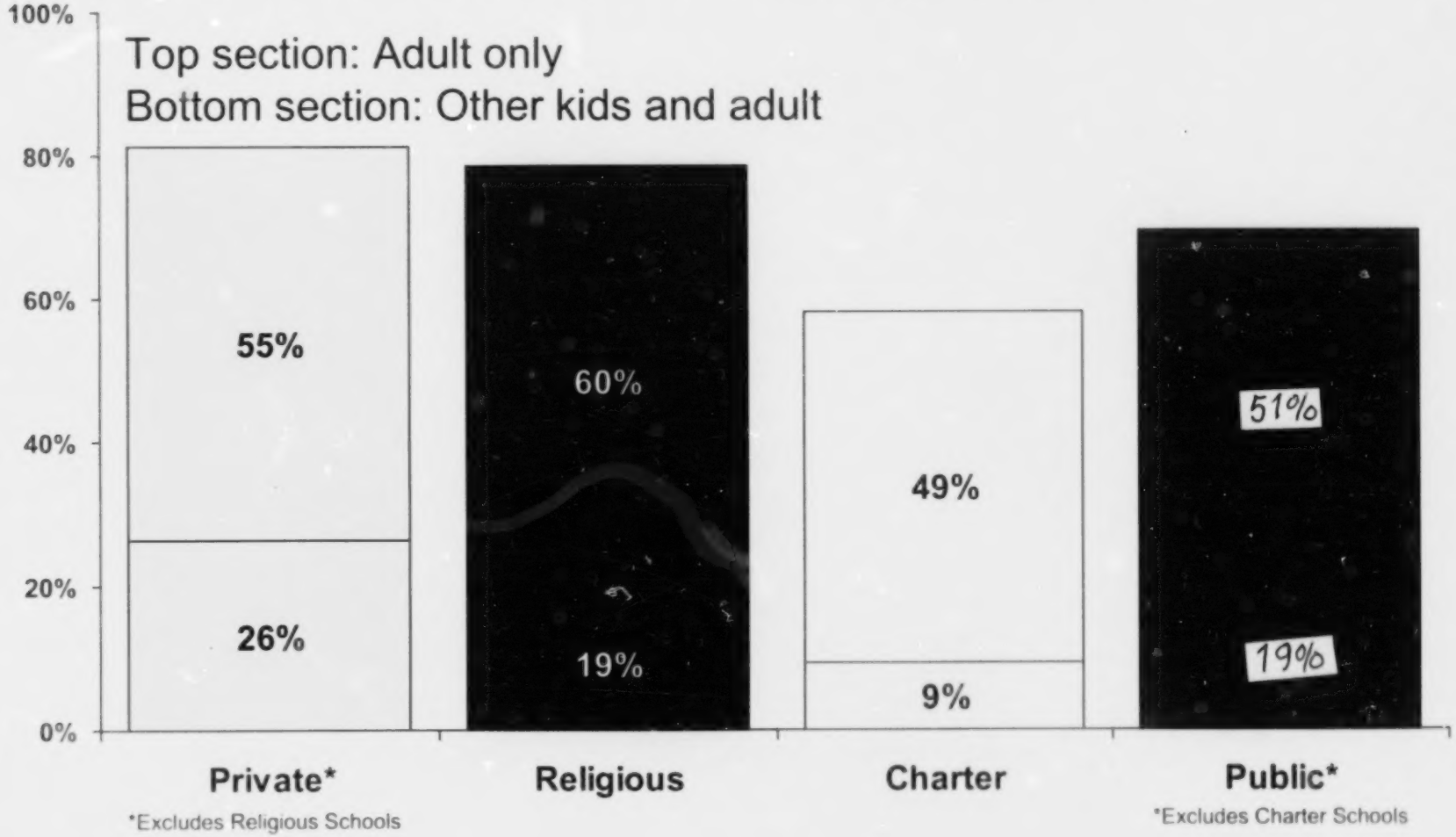
Q: Between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., did the share of time students spent with an adult vary by type of school?

A: Sixth-graders in private and private religious schools spent more time with an adult than sixth-graders in other types of schools.



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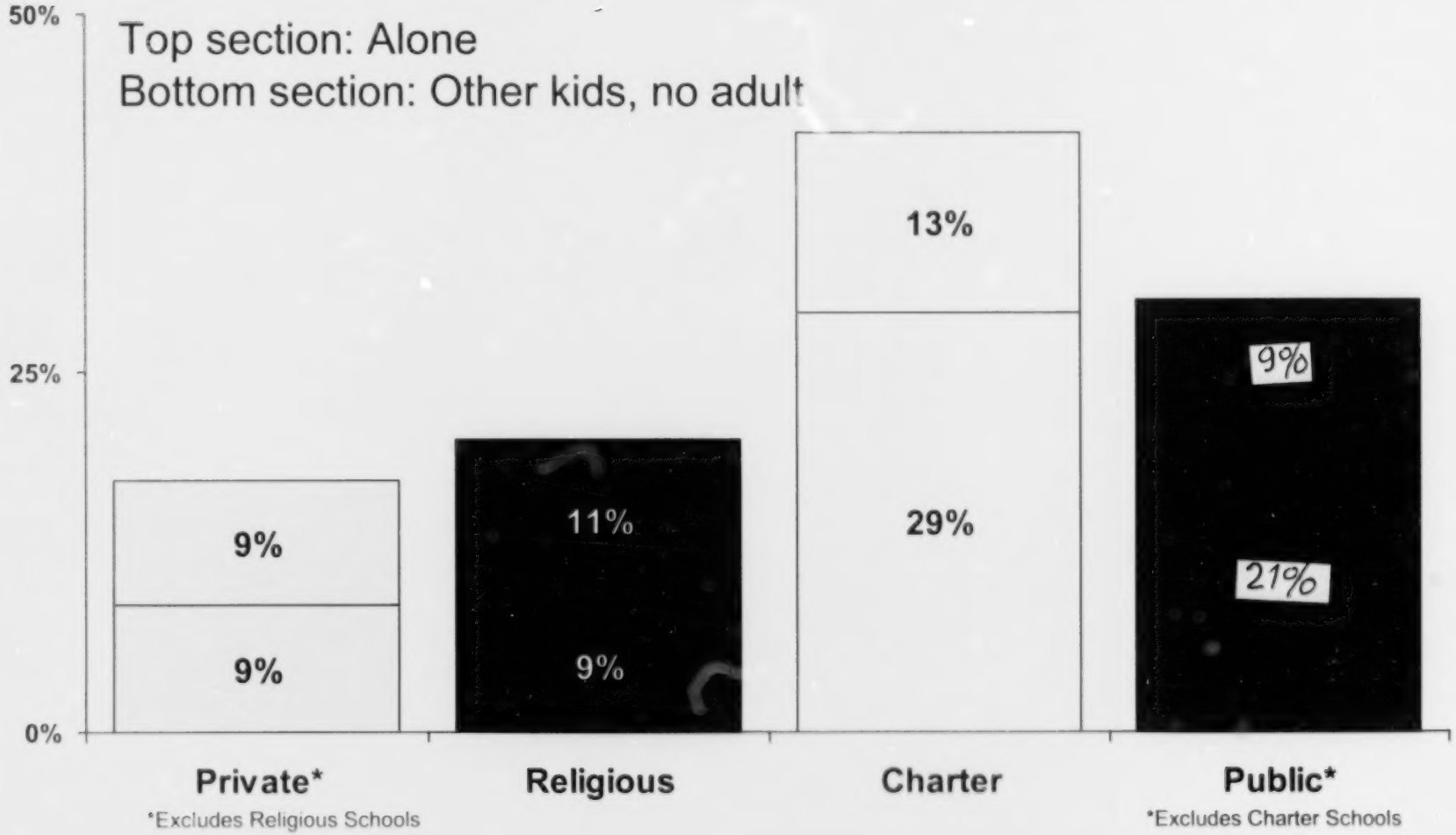
Q: Between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., did the share of time sixth-grade students spent without an adult vary by school type?

A: Sixth-graders in charter and other public schools spent more time without an adult than sixth-graders in other types of schools.



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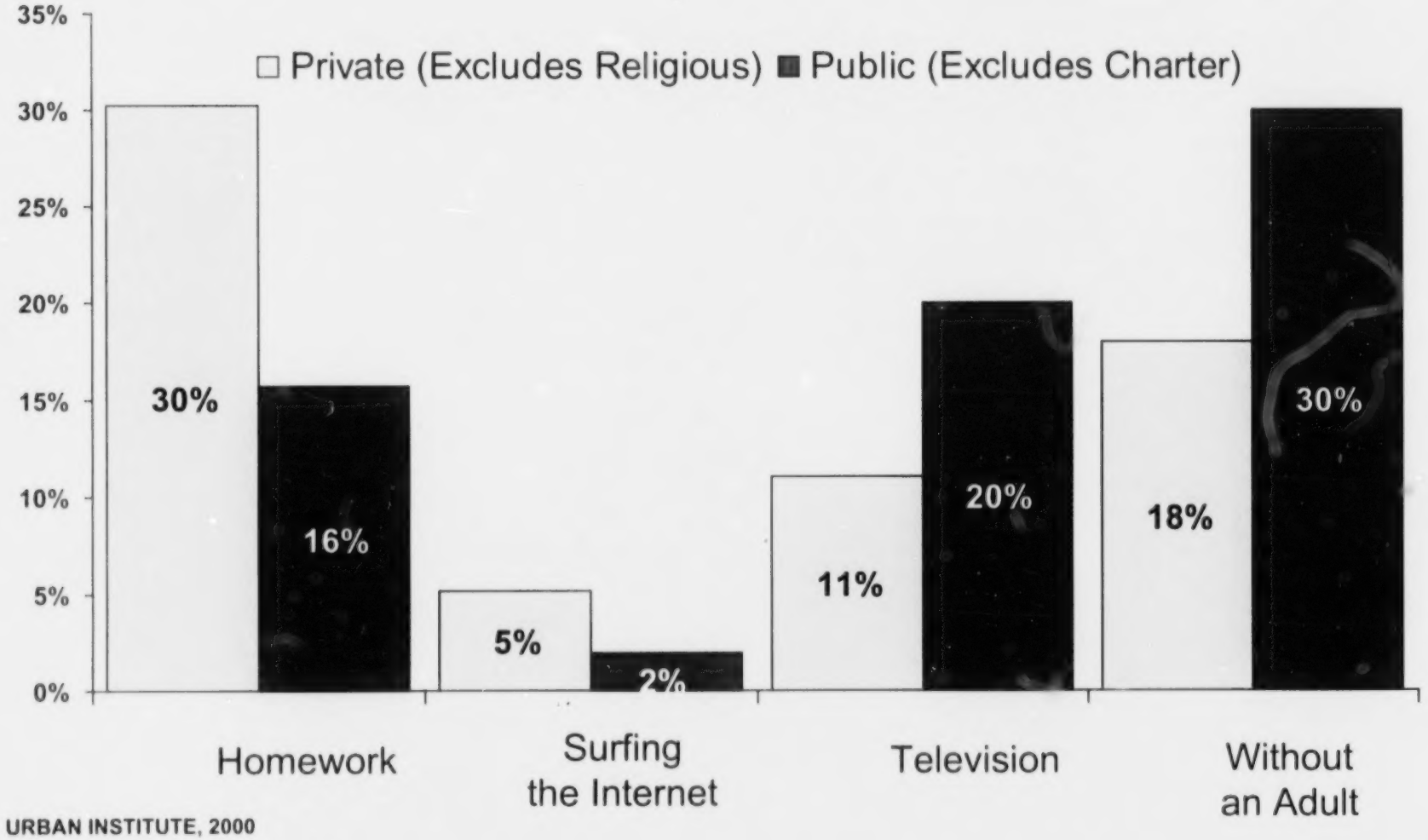
Q: Between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., what are the major differences in the way time is spent between private and public school sixth-grade students?
A: Private school sixth-graders spent more time doing homework and surfing the internet, and less time watching television or without an adult.



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